

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OSLO 01139 071619Z
ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ACDA-12 AGRE-00 AID-05
CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DLOS-09
DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-08 EPA-01 SOE-02 DOE-11 FMC-01
TRSE-00 H-01 INR-10 INT-05 IO-13 JUSE-00 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 NSF-01 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-05 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 SIL-01 LAB-04 /144 W
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P R 071545Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY OSLO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5384
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 1139

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EFIS, PBOR, NO, UR
SUBJECT: CENTER PARTY COMMENTS ON GREY ZONE AGREEMENT

1. ON MARCH 6, TWO DAYS BEFORE THE SCHEDULED STORTING DEBATE ON THE NORWEGIAN/SOVIET INTERIM FISHERIES AGREEMENT ("GREY ZONE"), CENTER PARTY CHAIRMAN GUNNAR STAALSETT, WHO HAD RECENTLY RETURNED FROM THE US, STATED IN A PRESS CONFERENCE THAT LABOR PARTY CHAIRMAN REIULF STEEN, ALSO A RECENT US VISITOR, MUST HAVE MISUNDERSTOOD THE AMERICAN OPINION ON THE GREY ZONE IF STEEN INTERPRETED IT TO MEAN THAT THE US CONSIDERS THE AGREEMENT A PURELY BILATERAL MATTER.

2. STAALSETT, WHOSE CENTER PARTY WILL, WITH THE OTHER NONSOCIALISTS, OPPOSE THE GREY ZONE IN THE STORTING DEBATE, STATED THAT AMERICAN OFFICIALS SHOWED GREAT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 OSLO 01139 071619Z

UNDERSTANDING FOR THE NONSOCIALIST VIEWPOINT REGARDING THE AGREEMENT. STAALSETT STATED QUOTE THE US LOOKS UPON THE AGREEMENT WITH THE SOVIET UNION FIRST AND FOREMOST ON THE BASIS OF ASPECTS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND SECURITY POLICIES AND TO A LESSER DEGREE AS A FISHERY AGREEMENT UNQUOTE. STAALSETT ALSO SAID QUOTE EVEN THOUGH IT IS CORRECT TO SAY THAT FORMALLY AND TECHNICALLY THERE IS ONLY

A QUESTION OF A MATTER WHICH CONCERNS NORWAY AND THE SOVIET UNION, AMERICAN AUTHORITIES SHOWED GREAT INTEREST FOR HOW THE RELATIONSHIP IN THE BARENTS SEA CAN HAVE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES FOR OTHER NATIONS THAN THOSE DIRECTLY INVOLVED UNQUOTE

3. STAALSETT ALSO STATED THAT QUOTE THE AMERICANS FOLLOW THE DEVELOPMENT IN THE NORTHERN AREAS AND THEY ARE NOT IN- DIFFERENT TO HOW NORWAY HANDLES THESE PROBLEMS UNQUOTE ASKED BY A REPORTER IF THE AMERICANS HAD DISAPPROVED OF THE GREY ZONE, STAALSETT INDICATED THAT HE HAD NOT, DURING HIS US VISIT, ASKED THAT QUESTION. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT IN RELATION TO THE STANDPOINT THAT THE NONSOCIALISTS HAVE TAKEN AGAINST THE AGREEMENT, HE FOUND NOTHING IN THE US WHICH GAVE REASON TO RECONSIDER THE NONSOCIALIST POSITION EVEN THOUGH HE DID NOT WANT TO INTERPRET THE STATEMENTS HE HAD HEARD AS SUPPORT FOR THE NONSOCIALIST POINT OF VIEW.

4. COMMENT: WITH THE CONTROVERSIAL "GREY ZONE" AGREEMENT DUE FOR STARTING CONSIDERATION ON MARCH 8, STAALSETT IS CLEARLY TRYING TO PROJECT AN INFERRED US SUPPORT FOR THE NONSOCIALIST POSITION. (THE AGREEMENT IS EXPECTED TO BE APPROVED BY A STRAIGHT PARTY-LINE VOTE).

5. TO DATE, THE EMBASSY HAS HAD NO PRESS INQUIRIES ON THE STAALSETT COMMENTS. IF ASKED, WE INTEND TO STATE THAT CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 OSLO 01139 071619Z

THE UNITED STATES DOES NOT BELIEVE IT APPROPRIATE TO COMMENT ON SUCH BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN A NATO ALLY AND A THIRD COUNTRY. IF ASKED, WE WOULD ALSO STATE, WITHOUT REFERENCE TO MR. STAALSETT'S REMARKS, THAT THE US OF COURSE MONITORS CLOSELY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE STRATEGIC NORTHERN AREAS.

6. ACTION REQUEST: SINCE THE STAALSETT REMARKS MAY GENERATE INQUIRIES FROM THE PRESS OR FROM POLITICAL FIGURES IN OSLO, EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S ASSESSMENT/ DESCRIPTION OF STAALSETT'S CONVERSATIONS IN WASHINGTON. LERNER

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Draft Date: 07 mar 1978
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Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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